

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Precision Products, Inc.

Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Precision Machine Parts Manufacturer Gains ISO Certification with Georgia Tech Assistance

Client Profile:

Precision Products, Inc. produces original equipment manufacturer (OEM) replacement parts for industries as varied as textile, food and beverage, automotive, medical, aerospace, military and power generation, in addition to reverse engineering parts. The family-owned company employs 22 people at its facility in Tunnel Hill, Georgia.

Situation:

When owner Don Smith began working as sales manager for Precision Products, the company primarily made high precision extrusion parts for the carpet industry. With the downturn in the economy, it was essential to diversify Precision's customer base. "As we started diversifying outside of the carpet industry into industries such as automotive, medical, industrial textiles, aerospace and power generation, it became obvious that we were going to have to separate ourselves from the average mom and pop machine shop," Smith recalled. "Although most customers don't demand that machine shops be ISO 9001 certified, it seemed to me that our shop was so close already with all of our process standards, procedures and organization." ISO 9001 is an international quality management system that certifies the application of formalized business processes. The standard takes a systematic approach to managing the organization's processes and ensuring a consistent product that meets customer expectations. Because limited resources and lack of time are often the major challenges to implementing ISO, Smith sought assistance from Georgia Tech's Enterprise Innovation Institute (EI2), a NIST MEP network affiliate.

Solution:

EI2's quality specialist, Craig Cochran, conducted a gap audit to identify areas of improvement, and helped the team develop an implementation plan. He trained the staff at Precision in quality issues and internal auditing, helped them meet project milestones and reviewed all company documentation. After Craig's initial visit, we started building our database of procedures and our quality manual," said Rich Graham, Precision's Director of Operations. "Craig conducted a pre-assessment audit and had a few minor findings but said we could pass them." With EI2's assistance, Precision Products received its ISO 9001 certification. "Having ISO has not only instilled some discipline and procedures into our plant to ensure that what we make is the same every time, but it also raises our awareness with a customer that this place is for real," noted Smith. "ISO isn't just a quality tool, it's a marketing tool. What we're really selling to our customers is machine uptime, innovation and service. They're now getting all of those things and a quality part made in an ISO shop."

Results:

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- * Achieved ISO 9001 certification.
- * Achieved a more competitive and profitable position.

Testimonial:

"ISO certification was like training for a marathon; it was tough and a long way, but we were very prepared with Georgia Tech's assistance."

Rich Graham, Director of Operations